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INVENTORY OF PUBLIC LANDS IN WEST VIRGINIA

By
J. E. Mason
and
W. W. Armentrout



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College of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics
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In cooperation with the
Bureau of Agricultural Economics
United States Department of Agriculture

FOREWORD

This bulletin is primarily an inventory of the publicly owned lands of the state. It inventories the land resources in which all our citizens own a share. Each of us has an undivided interest in more than a million acres of land in West Virginia.

A limited amount of information on privately owned lands also is given, particularly the acreage assessed for taxes. These data were sought in an effort to account for all lands. That objective was not achieved, but the data assembled are included in this bulletin in the hope that interest may be aroused that will lead to the keeping of more complete and accurate records, both by county officials and by agencies administering Federal, state, county, and municipally owned lands.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. R. Horton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

INVENTORY OF PUBLIC LANDS IN WEST VIRGINIA*

By
J. E. Mason† and W. W. Armentrout‡

WEST VIRGINIA has a land area of 15,417,600 acres. Nearly a million acres, or about 6 percent, are owned by the United States. The state owns 135,000 acres, or slightly less than 1 percent. County and municipally owned lands total only a fraction of 1 percent also — for those units reporting, the total is only about 22,000 acres. Total acreage in public ownership is 1,113,000 acres, or 7.2 percent of the land area (Table 1).

TABLE 1—Summary Data on Land Use and Ownership of Public Lands¹ in West Virginia, 1945

Use or ownership	Acres
Classification by political subdivision	
Federally owned land	955,957
State-owned land	134,579
County-owned land	15,677
Municipally owned land	6,758
Total publicly owned land	1,112,971
Classification by function	
Land in cities and villages	385,073
Land in highway rights-of-way	130,074
Land in railroads	49,378
Land in airports	4,330
Land in public parks	36,258
Land in public forests	962,532
Land in public wildlife areas	78,457
Land in public primary and secondary schools	5,413
Land in colleges and universities:	
Public	3,842
Private	8,173

¹Also listed: land in cities and villages; land in airports, public and private; land in railroads; and land in privately owned colleges and universities.

*This report is part of a national land-inventory project of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture, being conducted under the general supervision of V. Webster Johnson and H. H. Wooten. The results of the project are being released, or planned for release, in national, regional, and state bulletins. The report for the State of West Virginia, a cooperative undertaking of the West Virginia Agricultural Experiment Station and the BAE, may not always carry the same state totals for Federal lands as would be carried by a national land-inventory report. Included among the reasons for the differences are (1) use of different dates, (2) method of classifying lands under long-term leases, (3) method of classifying military sites transferred from other agencies, and (4) use of different sources for information.

The Federal, state, county, and municipal officials and employees who contributed data for this bulletin are far too numerous to list individually, but each contributor will recognize his part, which is hereby acknowledged with thanks.

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Based on official and estimated figures, 92 percent of the rural land area, or 14,160,000 acres, is privately owned and assessed for taxes.

A relatively small acreage of privately owned land is tax-exempt. Such land is used mainly by churches, private schools, and charitable organizations.

Cities, villages, and small settlements of 100 or more population take up about $2\frac{1}{2}$ percent of the land area, or 385,000 acres.

Summary of these figures totals more than 100 percent, largely because of the use of estimates of the acreage assessed for taxes.

The inland water area, which is in addition to the land-area figure given above, is approximately 58,000 acres.

SOURCE, ACCURACY, AND COMPLETENESS OF DATA

This report is not presented as a complete accounting of all lands; with data available it is not possible to account for all land by counties. In some counties the acreages reported in the various categories that should add up to the total land area actually exceed the accepted figure for the total land area — the totals for the state exceed the land area by approximately 257,000 acres. In other counties, the acreage that can be accounted for falls short of the land-area figure. This report therefore is presented as the best possible compilation of data from available sources.

There is no single source of up-to-date data on Federal, state, county, or municipally owned lands in West Virginia. Likewise there is no single place where one can find out how much of the land of the state is privately owned and assessed for taxes. The information in this bulletin came from numerous sources indicated more specifically below. The letters, maps, memoranda, notes, questionnaires, tabulations, publications, and similar sources of data in this bulletin are in the files of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics.

Basic data compiled from the several sources were assembled in preliminary form and sent to state, county, and municipal agencies or individuals who furnished the data originally, for the purpose of checking and filling in missing items. Therefore the state agencies that administer real estate and one or more officials in each county have had the opportunity to review the basic information that now appears in this bulletin. The corrections made, together with new information supplied through this process, have contributed materially to making this report reasonably complete and accurate. Specific shortcomings, where known, are cited in the paragraphs immediately following.

Land Area (Table 2)

The land area figures of the Bureau of the Census are used in Table 2. Where a local source has reported a figure varying from the published figure of the Census, the figure from the local source is given in a footnote.

TABLE 2—Distribution of Private and Public Lands, by Counties, 1945

County	Land area Acres	Privately owned		Fed- erally owned	State- owned	County- owned	Municipally owned	Land in cities and villages ¹		Land not accounted for	Highway rights-of- way
		Assessed	Tax exempt					Acres	Acres		
Barbour	218,240	215,248	1,119	21,866	740	255	2	4,308	35,298		2,508
Berkeley	202,240	196,088	4	383	2146	105	502	2,988	2,028		1,987
Boone	320,640	319,460	200	0	0	300	0	10,387	39,707		1,490
Braxton	330,880	312,000	1,000	0	6,765	2,000	0	4,687	4,428		3,296
Brooke	56,960	51,000	2,190	16	22	50	4	3,886	3188		714
Cabell	178,560	164,000	1,450	13	957	300	86	8,391	3,363		2,069
Calhoun	179,840	180,000	4	0	0	200	300	1,660	2,320		2,066
Clay	218,880	218,870	10	0	0	86	1	2,882	32,969		1,917
Doddridge	204,160	208,556	552	0	237	70	1	1,046	36,102		2,154
Fayette	421,760	413,101	50	71	3,517	1,248	500	29,026	23,257		3,139
Gilmer	216,960	216,475	4	0	122	160	0	1,721	31,518		2,442
Grant	305,280	289,110	60	14,126	50	325	25	1,420	164		1,531
Greenbrier	656,640	546,406	26	105,126	5,004	126	168	7,454	37,670		3,635
Hampshire	408,960	386,821	227	2,645	16,109	85	5	1,917	1,151		2,596
Hancock	52,480	49,139	261	14	1,351	34	0	4,608	32,927		814
Hardy	374,400	4	4	48,345	4,828	67	0	816	---		1,720
Harrison	267,520	257,292	100	0	72	225	286	14,212	34,667		3,184
Jackson	296,320	290,320	150	10	2685	75	13	2,013	3,054		3,548
Jefferson	135,040	128,301	4	148	274	180	9	3,948	2,180		1,206
Kanawha	581,120	522,132	5,761	3,255	6,822	1,000	10	35,487	6,653		4,239
Lewis	250,880	4	4	0	960	350	0	1,952	---		2,408
Lincoln	280,320	4	4	0	0	121	0	3,371	---		2,461
Logan	291,840	284,340	84	0	21,500	256	0	20,075	314,415		1,311
McDowell	341,120	341,509	4	0	7,728	350	0	32,393	340,471		2,000
Marion	197,760	196,735	200	3	48	350	286	14,572	314,434		2,858
Marshall	195,840	195,515	4	2	250	40	35	4,124	34,126		2,181
Mason	276,480	257,193	2	17,068	1,252	269	33	5,143	34,480		3,175
Mercer	266,880	250,000	10	0	119	250	76	12,627	3,798		3,045

¹Named settlements of 100 or more in population, whether incorporated or not.

²Part or all of this acreage was reported on a questionnaire and not identified by name or use and is not listed in the following tables.

³Acreage in excess of the total land-area figure of the Bureau of the Census.

⁴No acreage reported.

⁵The tax assessor reports the total land area of Marion County as 200,672 acres.

TABLE 2—Distribution of Private and Public Lands, by Counties, 1945 (continued)

County	Land area	Privately owned		Fed-erally owned	State-owned	County-owned	Municipally owned	Land in cities & villages ¹	Land not accounted for	Highway rights-of-way
		Assessed	Tax-exempt							
	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres
Mineral	211,200	205,300	100	425	2623	1,100	400	3,177	75	1,640
Mingo	270,720	269,449	60	0	21	4	10	11,942	311,383	1,575
Monongalia	233,600	4	4	905	6,235	139	304	10,657	---	3,191
Monroe	302,720	302,000	4	0	610	150	5	1,932	31,977	2,327
Morgan	149,120	133,985	107	0	5,843	140	13	1,817	7,215	1,376
Nicholas	415,360	4	4	23,434	375	90	6	5,579	---	2,665
Ohio	68,480	55,132	600	0	100	1,700	1,000	7,500	2,448	802
Pendleton	444,800	337,562	6	106,608	275	157	14	1,629	31,251	2,227
Pleasants	83,200	83,205	63	2130	694	54	10	1,280	32,236	1,007
Pocahontas	603,520	311,889	4	276,849	21,555	4	0	3,171	39,944	2,651
Preston	412,800	4	4	5,486	9,458	105	8	7,064	---	4,957
Putnam	223,360	221,933	4	2,912	24	615	0	3,668	35,772	2,529
Raleigh	386,560	378,972	25	0	352	164	1	31,123	324,077	2,999
Randolph	663,040	451,870	132	173,080	12,428	118	232	7,654	17,526	3,296
Ritchie	289,280	283,896	160	0	22	190	1,850	2,997	185	3,032
Roane	311,040	329,607	490	0	184	460	3	1,631	321,335	3,541
Summers	239,760	230,707	4	22,984	24,944	54	0	4,237	33,166	2,387
Taylor	712,000	98,000	100	3,835	3,238	200	50	3,526	3,051	1,488
Tucker	269,440	171,420	4	93,702	21,433	292	14	3,659	31,080	1,846
Tyler	163,840	158,873	632	4	21	35	0	1,922	2,373	1,797
Upshur	225,280	4	4	0	331	108	0	2,911	---	2,801
Wayne	328,320	4	43	348	6,167	188	0	5,120	---	3,305
Webster	352,640	277,819	200	72,017	0	250	1	2,936	3583	1,853
Wetzel	231,680	232,128	4	84	0	131	1	4,399	35,063	2,503
Wirt	149,760	4	4	9	30	85	0	1,029	---	1,695
Wood	235,520	235,064	4	54	258	185	494	6,873	37,208	3,152
Wyoming	322,560	322,000	100	0	2500	90	0	8,526	38,656	1,738
Total	15,417,600	14,159,891	916,270	955,957	134,579	915,677	96,758	385,073	-----	130,074

¹The tax assessor reports the total land area of Roane County as 379,000 acres.

²The tax assessor reports the total land area of Taylor County as 113,401 acres.

includes 2,543,000 acres estimated for the 9 counties from which no report was received. This figure was obtained by applying the same percentage to the total land area (less the Federal and state-owned acreage) of the 9 counties as was found to be the percentage of the total land area (less Federal and state-owned acreage) assessed in the 46 counties reporting. The total also includes 46,469 acres in railroad and outside urban areas.

³Not necessarily complete.

Land Privately Owned, Assessed for Taxes (Table 2)

These data are available from the Land Books, compiled by the county tax assessor. Copies are kept by the tax assessor, the county sheriff (who collects the taxes), and the state auditor. Individual properties are listed, whether taxable or not, and one might assume that it would be relatively simple to obtain data for a study such as this. It would be simple if recapitulations were made by each county tax assessor. However, since assessors are interested primarily in "value" and secondarily in acres, in many of the counties perhaps no acreage totals have been made. Therefore the data on acreage of privately owned land assessed for taxes are incomplete. Questionnaires were returned by tax assessor or the sheriff in 46 counties. The respondent was requested to supply the official figure or an estimate. In many cases the acreage assessed was estimated; this is one of the reasons why the total of all land reported in the various categories exceeds the county land area in a few counties and the state land area by approximately 257,000 acres.

Except for the state total for railroads, lands in public-service corporations are not included in the assessed acreage in Table 2. The data are not available.

Tax-exempt Acreage (Table 2)

The tax assessor or the sheriff was asked to fill in the official figure or to make an estimate of the privately owned tax-exempt land in his county on a form sent to him by mail. Acreages thus reported are small; in some cases no tax-exempt land was reported. Of course, every county has a small acreage in this category even though it be only of small plots in church sites and cemeteries. In some counties, private schools and charitable organizations have tracts of nontaxable land. Hence it is likely that these data are not entirely complete.

Federally Owned Lands (Table 2)

This information was obtained primarily from the administering agency by correspondence, personal contact, published sources, and through the Federal Real Estate Board. It is nearly 100 percent complete and accurate. To aid the tax assessor or sheriff in accounting for all the land, space for Federally owned land was provided on the form sent them. In a few cases small acreages were reported that could not be matched with data from the administering agencies. These data are retained in Table 2.

Data in Table 2 are compiled on the basis of ownership; therefore, the column for Federally owned land contains data on lands that, while Federally owned, may be leased to a state agency for administration.

State-owned Land (Table 2)

These data were obtained from the administering agency through correspondence and personal interview and from annual reports or other published sources. As in the case of Federally owned lands, the tax assessor or sheriff listed small acreages that could not be matched with data supplied by the state agencies. Some of this is tax-delinquent land for which data were obtained from county sources. Tax-delinquent records are available; they were examined in the Land Department of the state auditor's office but, because the total was insignificant, it was not considered feasible to tabulate the data.

The column for state-owned land in Table 2 does not include highway rights-of-way. This information, furnished by the State Road Commission, appears separately in another column of the same table, since it is believed that such rights-of-way are usually included in the acreages reported in the remaining columns. Most of the land occupied by roads is probably counted in the over-all farm or other acreage through which the roads pass or which they adjoin.

With the exception of tax-delinquent land, the state-owned land data are complete and accurate.

County-owned Land (Table 2)

These data were obtained from the tax assessor or sheriff and from the county school superintendent through mail questionnaires. Some county-owned land was reported in all but 2 counties. These counties have some land, too — at least school lands. Some of the other counties probably own lands not reported, but the total acreage is undoubtedly small.

Municipally Owned Land (Table 2)

The data for this category came from mail questionnaires returned by mayors, clerks, or other municipal officials, in addition to acreages reported by the tax assessor or sheriff. It may be assumed that some minor tracts of municipally owned lands have not been reported.

These data are for the lands outside corporate limits of cities and villages.

Land in Cities and Villages (Table 2)

Data on land in cities and villages were prepared by F. J. Marschner, of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, for all named settlements with a population of 100 or more. Consequently, land in some populated places, included as cities and villages, is carried on the tax rolls as acreages rather than lots. Hence some duplication with data in the column of privately owned land assessed for taxes is inevitable. On the other hand some small, thinly settled subdivisions have not been accounted for at all.

TABLE 3—Total Acreage of Publicly Owned Lands and Percentage of Land Area, by Counties, 1945

County	Publicly owned lands	Percentage of land area
	Acres	Percent
Barbour	2,863	1.31
Berkeley	1,136	0.56
Boone	300	0.09
Braxton	8,765	2.65
Brooke	72	0.13
Cabell	1,356	0.76
Calhoun	500	0.28
Clay	87	0.04
Doddridge	108	0.05
Fayette	5,336	1.27
Gilmer	282	0.13
Grant	14,526	4.76
Greenbrier	110,424	16.81
Hampshire	18,844	4.61
Hancock	1,399	2.67
Hardy	53,240	14.22
Harrison	583	0.22
Jackson	783	0.26
Jefferson	611	0.45
Kanawha	11,087	1.91
Lewis	1,310	0.52
Lincoln	121	0.04
Logan	1,756	0.60
McDowell	8,078	2.37
Marion	687	0.35
Marshall	327	0.17
Mason	18,622	6.74
Mercer	445	0.17
Mineral	2,548	1.21
Mingo	11	¹
Monongalia	7,583	3.25
Monroe	765	0.25
Morgan	5,996	4.02
Nicholas	23,905	5.76
Ohio	2,800	4.09
Pendleton	106,854	24.02
Pleasants	888	1.07
Pocahontas	298,404	49.44
Preston	15,057	3.65
Putnam	3,531	1.58
Raleigh	517	0.13
Randolph	185,858	28.03
Ritchie	2,042	0.71
Roane	647	0.21
Summers	7,982	3.47
Taylor	7,323	6.54
Tucker	95,441	35.42
Tyler	40	0.02
Upshur	439	0.19
Wayne	6,703	2.04
Webster	72,268	20.49
Wetzel	216	0.09
Wirt	124	0.08
Wood	791	0.34
Wyoming	590	0.18
Total	1,112,971	7.22

¹Less than 0.005 percent.

Land Not Accounted For (Table 2)

The data in this column represent the differences between the total land area and the sum of the reported acreages of privately and publicly owned lands and land in cities and villages. Twenty-nine counties account for more land than the Bureau of the Census gives as the total land area. This is due in some cases to overestimating the acreage assessed for taxes.

A considerable acreage of land in certain counties cannot be accounted for with available statistics. Why is this true? Several possible explanations are included to account for the discrepancies. First, certain small acreages may not be on the tax rolls. Second, many tracts may be carried on the tax rolls with fewer acres than is actually the case, since deeds based on old surveys frequently call for fewer acres than a new measurement would show. Third, properties of public-service corporations are not assessed by the county tax assessor, and no data are available concerning the acreage of these properties by counties. Fourth, the figure reported for some of the counties is an estimate furnished by the tax assessor. Fifth, land reverted to the state for nonpayment of taxes has not been fully accounted for. Sixth, the land-area figures are in themselves subject to error.

LAND IN PUBLIC OWNERSHIP

Federal Lands (Tables 4 and 5)

The United States owns 956,000 acres in the state, of which 84 percent is administered by the Forest Service. The War Department had nearly 27,000 acres in 1945. Other Federal lands are administered by the Department of the Interior, the Department of Justice, the Navy Department, the National Housing Agency, and the Veterans Administration. Certain urban properties are Federally owned but have not been made a part of this study.

The Federal lands are distributed among 34 of the 55 counties, although 10 counties have 97 percent of the Federally owned lands. The greatest concentration of this acreage is in the national forests in the eastern part of the state.

State Lands (Tables 6 and 7)

State-owned lands are primarily in parks, forests, wildlife refuges, and highways. Other uses include prison farms, correctional institutions, hospitals, sanatoria, colleges, and experimental farms.

Exclusive of highway rights-of-way, lands in state ownership amount to 12 percent of the total acreage in public ownership. If state highways are included, state-owned lands amount to 21 percent of the acreage in public ownership. About half of the state-owned land is in highway rights-of-way. More accurately, the state has an easement over most

TABLE 4—Federally Owned Land, by Name of Property, June 30, 1945

Property	County	Acres
George Washington National Forest	Hampshire	2,645
	Hardy	48,336
	Pendleton	46,438
		97,419
Monongahela National Forest	Grant	14,126
	Greenbrier	98,919
	Nicholas	23,434
	Pendleton	60,170
	Pocahontas	276,849
	Preston	3,891
	Randolph	170,195
	Tucker	93,702
	Webster	64,697
		805,983
Land-utilization area	Mason	7,948
Federal fish hatchery	Jefferson	148
Fisheries station	Greenbrier	25
U. S. fish culture station	Hardy	9
Federal prison camp	Pocahontas	Forest Service Land
Federal reformatory	Summers	
Veterans hospital	Wayne	530
Veterans hospital	Berkeley	324
Arthurdale Homesteads	Preston	191
Red House Homesteads	Putnam	1,595
Tygart Valley Homesteads	Randolph	2,020
Alleghany Ordnance Plant	Mineral	2,885
Ashford General Hospital	Greenbrier	425
Baker General Hospital	Berkeley	6,182
Grafton National Cemetery	Taylor	192
Marietta Manufacturing Company	Mason	3
Marshall Chemical Plant	Wetzel	82
Morgantown Ordnance Works	Monongalia	84
Naval Ordnance Plant	Kanawha	825
Navy Yard	Mason	355
Sylvania Electric Products	Cabell	7
West Virginia Ordnance Works	Mason	13
		8,332
Flood-control and navigation works	Barbour	1,751
	Brooke	16
	Fayette	71
	Hancock	14
	Jackson	10
	Kanawha	2,900
	Marion	3
	Marshall	2
	Mason	699
	Monongalia	80
	Putnam	892
	Summers	152
	Taylor	3,832
	Tyler	4
	Wayne	24
	Wirt	9
	Wood	54
		10,513

TABLE 5—Federally Owned Lands, by Agency and County, 1945

County	Department				National Housing Agency	Other	Total
	Agri- culture	Interior	War	Navy			
	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres
Barbour	0	0	1,751	0	0	115	1,866
Berkeley	0	0	192	0	0	291	383
Brooke	0	0	16	0	0	0	16
Cabell	0	0	0	13	0	0	13
Fayette	0	0	71	0	0	0	71
Grant	14,126	0	0	0	0	0	14,126
Greenbrier	98,919	25	6,182	0	0	0	105,126
Hampshire	2,645	0	0	0	0	0	2,645
Hancock	0	0	14	0	0	0	14
Hardy	48,336	9	0	0	0	0	48,345
Jackson	0	0	10	0	0	0	10
Jefferson	0	148	0	0	0	0	148
Kanawha	0	0	2,900	355	0	0	3,255
Marion	0	0	3	0	0	0	3
Marshall	0	0	2	0	0	0	2
Mason	7,948	0	9,031	89	0	0	17,068
Mineral	0	0	425	0	0	0	425
Monongalia	0	0	905	0	0	0	905
Nicholas	23,434	0	0	0	0	0	23,434
Pendleton	106,608	0	0	0	0	0	106,608
Pleasants	0	0	0	0	0	130	130
Pocohontas	276,849	0	0	0	0	0	276,849
Preston	3,891	0	0	0	1,595	0	5,486
Putnam	0	0	892	0	2,020	0	2,912
Randolph	170,195	0	0	0	2,885	0	173,080
Summers	0	0	152	0	0	12,832	2,984
Taylor	0	0	3,835	0	0	0	3,835
Tucker	93,702	0	0	0	0	0	93,702
Tyler	0	0	4	0	0	0	4
Wayne	0	0	24	0	0	2324	348
Webster	372,017	0	0	0	0	0	72,017
Wetzel	0	0	84	0	0	0	84
Wirt	0	0	9	0	0	0	9
Wood	0	0	54	0	0	0	54
Total	918,670	182	26,556	457	6,500	3,592	955,957

¹ Acreage reported on a questionnaire and not identified by name or use.

² Veterans hospital.

³ Holly River State Park, consisting of 7,320 acres, included here, is leased to the West Virginia Conservation Commission.

TABLE 6—State-owned or State-administered Land, by Name of Property, June 30, 1945

Property	County	Acres	
Audra State Park	Barbour	316	
Babcock State Park	Fayette	3,231	
Blackwater Falls State Park ¹	Tucker	446	
Cacapon State Park	Morgan	5,812	
Carnifex Ferry Battlefield State Park	Nicholas	375	
Cathedral State Park	Preston	118	
Droop Mountain Battlefield State Park	Pocahontas	265	
Grand View State Park	Raleigh	32	
Hawk's Nest State Park	Fayette	49	
Holly River State Park ²	Webster	7,320	
Lost River State Park	Hardy	3,841	
Pinnacle Rocks State Park	Mercer	52	
Tomlinson Run State Park	Hancock	1,351	
Tygart's Lake State Park	Barbour	424	
	Taylor	1,351	
Watoga State Park	Pocahontas	10,052	35,035
Cabwaylingo State Forest	Wayne	6,167	
Cooper's Rock State Forest	Monongalia	5,147	
	Preston	7,883	
Forest Tree Nursery	Cabell	25	
Greenbrier State Forest	Greenbrier	5,004	
Kanawha State Forest	Kanawha	6,705	
Kumbrabow State Forest	Randolph	9,425	
Seneca State Forest	Pocahontas	11,050	
Panther Creek State Forest and Game Refuge	McDowell	7,724	59,130
Beaver Dam Refuge ²	Randolph	4,700	
Blue Creek Refuge ¹	Kanawha	23,000	
	Clay	4,000	
Braxton Game Refuge	Braxton	6,765	
Cranberry Refuge ²	Pocahontas	9,069	
Dorcas Fish Hatchery (undeveloped)	Grant	41	
Flat Rock Refuge ²	Tucker	1,000	
	Randolph	4,120	
Hornor Game Refuge	Lewis	189	
Little River Refuge ²	Pocahontas	9,000	
Marlington Fish Hatchery	Pocahontas	5	
Nathaniel Mountain Game Refuge	Hampshire	8,194	
Palestine Fish Hatchery	Wirt	30	
Petersburg Fish Hatchery	Grant	9	
Ridge Fish Hatchery	Morgan	31	
Short Mountain Refuge	Hampshire	7,750	
State Game Farm	Upshur	331	
State Quail Farm ¹	Randolph	41	78,275

TABLE 6—State-owned or State-administered Land, by Name of Property, June 30, 1945 (continued)

Property	County	Acres	
Barboursville Unit of Weston State Hospital	Cabell	24	
Fairmont Emergency Hospital	Marion	3	
Huntington State Hospital	Cabell	698	
Lakin State Hospital	Mason	1,252	
Spencer State Hospital	Roane	184	
Welch Emergency Hospital	Welch (city)	4	
Weston State Hospital	Lewis	580	
Berkeley Springs Sanitarium	Morgan	30	
Denmar Sanitarium	Pocahontas	183	
Hopemont Sanitarium	Preston	1,000	
Pinecrest Sanitarium	Raleigh	300	
Andrew S. Rowan Memorial Home	Monroe	610	
Children's Home	Randolph	167	
Colored Children's Home	Cabell	190	
Home for Aged and Infirm Colored Men and Women	Fayette	122	
Training School	Pleasants	694	
			6,011
West Virginia Penitentiary	Marshall	250	
Medium Security Prison	Randolph	2,836	
Industrial School for Boys	Taylor	1,887	
Industrial School for Colored Boys	Mason	Duplicates other acreage	
Industrial Home for Girls	Harrison	72	
Industrial Home for Colored Girls	Cabell	Duplicates other acreage	
			5,045
Bluefield State College	Mercer	22	
Concord College	Mercer	65	
Fairmont State College	Marion	45	
Glenville State College	Gilmer	122	
Marshall College	Cabell	20	
Potomac State School of West Virginia University	Mineral	265	
Schools for the Deaf and Blind	Hampshire	165	
Schools for the Colored Deaf and Blind	Kanawha	34	
Shepherd College	Jefferson	116	
West Liberty State College	Ohio	100	
West Virginia State College	Kanawha	83	
West Virginia University	Monongalia	66	
West Virginia Agricultural Experiment Stations:			
University Farms	Monongalia	1,022	
Reymann Memorial Farms	Hardy	987	
Experiment Farm	Jefferson	158	
Reedsville Experiment Farm	Preston	457	
West Virginia Institute of Technology	Fayette	115	
			3,842
Total state-owned or administered			187,338

¹Not state-owned.

²Leased from the United States.

³Consists of only baths and swimming pools.

TABLE 7—State-owned Lands, by Counties, 1945

County	Forests, parks, and game refuges ¹	Prison farms and correc- tional insti- tutions	Hospitals, sanatoria, and homes	Colleges, univer- sities, and exper- iment farms	Other ²	Total
	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres
Barbour	740	0	0	0	0	740
Berkeley	0	0	0	0	146	146
Braxton	6,765	0	0	0	0	6,765
Brooke	0	0	0	0	2	2
Cabell	25	0	912	20	0	957
Doddridge	0	0	0	0	37	37
Fayette	3,280	0	122	115	0	3,517
Gilmer	0	0	0	122	0	122
Grant	50	0	0	0	0	50
Greenbrier	5,004	0	0	0	0	5,004
Hampshire	15,944	0	0	165	0	16,109
Hancock	1,351	0	0	0	0	1,351
Hardy	3,841	0	0	987	0	4,828
Harrison	0	72	0	0	0	72
Jackson	0	0	0	0	685	685
Jefferson	0	0	0	274	0	274
Kanawha	6,705	0	0	117	0	6,822
Lewis	189	0	580	0	191	960
Logan	0	0	0	0	1,500	1,500
McDowell	7,724	0	4	0	0	7,728
Marion	0	0	3	45	0	48
Marshall	0	250	0	0	0	250
Mason	0	0	1,252	0	0	1,252
Mercer	32	0	0	87	0	119
Mineral	0	0	0	265	358	623
Mingo	0	0	0	0	1	1
Monongalia	5,147	0	0	1,088	0	6,235
Monroe	0	0	610	0	0	610
Morgan	5,843	0	0	0	0	5,843
Nicholas	375	0	0	0	0	375
Ohio	0	0	0	100	0	100
Pendleton	0	0	0	0	75	75
Pleasants	0	0	694	0	0	694
Pocahontas	21,372	0	183	0	0	21,555
Preston	8,001	0	1,000	457	0	9,458
Putnam	0	0	0	0	4	4
Raleigh	52	0	300	0	0	352
Randolph	9,425	2,836	167	0	0	12,428
Ritchie	0	0	0	0	2	2
Roane	0	0	184	0	0	184
Summers	0	0	0	0	4,944	4,944
Taylor	1,351	1,887	0	0	0	3,238

Table 7—State-owned Lands, by Counties, 1945 (continued)

County-	Forests, parks, and game refuges ¹	Prison farms and correc- tional insti- tutions	Hospitals, sanatoria, and homes	Colleges, univer- sities, and experi- ment farms	Other ²	Total
Tucker	0	0	0	0	1,433	1,433
Tyler	0	0	0	0	1	1
Upshur	331	0	0	0	0	331
Wayne	6,167	0	0	0	0	6,167
Wirt	30	0	0	0	0	30
Wood	0	0	0	0	58	58
Wyoming	0	0	0	0	500	500
Total	109,744	5,045	6,011	3,842	9,937	134,579

¹The West Virginia Conservation Commission has an additional 38,396 acres leased and used for parks and game refuges.

²Acres reported on a questionnaire and not identified as to site or use of the property.

of the 130,000 acres in highways; the acreage is probably still counted as land in farms and other acreage assessed for taxes. To avoid the probability of double counting, the land used for highways has not been added to the totals in Table 2.

In 6 counties no state lands were reported; 11 other counties had less than 100 acres each, and the state owns more than 5,000 acres in each of another 11 counties.

Tax-title lands have been included in only a few counties.

County Lands (Table 2)

The counties own very little land, only 16,000 acres being reported. Other than the small acreages in school sites, many counties own no rural lands.

Municipal Lands (Tables 2 and 11)

Several cities and towns own small tracts of rural lands, although the total reported is only 6,800 acres.

USE OF PUBLICLY OWNED LANDS

Forests (Table 9)

On an acreage basis, forests occupy several times as much area as all other publicly owned lands combined. The Federal and state lands in forests total 962,532 acres distributed among 16 counties. Over 6 percent of the land area of the state is in publicly owned forests, none of which is reported as county or municipally owned. A few municipalities reported watershed-protection areas, about 100 acres, which may be presumed to be in forest cover.

TABLE 8—Land in Public Parks, by Counties, 1945

County	State-administered	Municipal	Total
	Acres	Acres	Acres
Barbour	740	0	740
Fayette	3,280	0	3,280
Hancock	1,351	0	1,351
Hardy	3,841	0	3,841
Harrison	0	88	88
Jefferson	0	5	5
Marion	0	90	90
Mercer	32	40	72
Morgan	5,812	0	5,812
Nicholas	375	0	375
Ohio	0	1,000	1,000
Pocahontas	10,317	0	10,317
Preston	118	0	118
Raleigh	52	0	52
Taylor	1,351	0	1,351
Tucker	446	0	446
Webster	7,320	0	7,320
Total	35,035	1,223	36,258

TABLE 9—Distribution of Publicly Owned Lands Administered as Forests, by Counties, 1945

County	Federal	State	Total
	Acres	Acres	Acres
Cabell	0	25	25
Grant	14,126	0	14,126
Greenbrier	98,919	5,004	103,923
Hampshire	2,645	0	2,645
Hardy	48,336	0	48,336
Kanawha	0	6,705	6,705
McDowell	0	7,724	7,724
Monongalia	0	5,147	5,147
Nicholas	23,434	0	23,434
Pendleton	106,608	0	106,608
Pocahontas	276,849	11,050	287,899
Preston	3,891	7,883	11,774
Randolph	170,195	9,425	179,620
Tucker	93,702	0	93,702
Wayne	0	6,167	6,167
Webster	64,697	0	64,697
Total	903,402	59,130	962,532

TABLE 10—Wildlife Areas Under Public Ownership or Administration, by Counties, 1945

County	State-administered			Department of Interior	Total
	State-owned	U. S. Forest Service	Leased		
	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres
Braxton	6,765	0	0	0	6,765
Clay	0	0	4,000	0	4,000
Grant	50	0	0	0	50
Greenbrier	0	0	0	25	25
Hampshire	15,944	0	0	0	15,944
Hardy	0	0	0	9	9
Jefferson	0	0	0	148	148
Kanawha	0	0	23,000	0	23,000
Lewis	189	0	0	0	189
Morgan	31	0	0	0	31
Pocahontas	5	18,069	0	0	18,074
Randolph	0	8,820	41	0	8,861
Tucker	0	1,000	0	0	1,000
Upshur	331	0	0	0	331
Wirt	30	0	0	0	30
Total	23,345	27,889	27,041	182	78,457

The Monongahela National Forest has a gross area of about 1.7 million acres, half of which has been purchased in 9 counties. The George Washington National Forest extends into 3 counties of the state, where 97,000 of a gross area of 162,000 acres have been bought. The state owns 7 state forests totaling 59,000 acres, located in 8 counties.

Part of the forest lands are also used for recreation and as wildlife refuges.

Parks (Table 8)

The publicly owned parks of West Virginia are either state or municipally administered. The state administers 15 parks, totaling 35,000 acres, in 15 counties. Two of the state-administered parks are owned by the United States. Five municipal parks outside the corporate limits of cities and villages have been reported, with a total of 1,223 acres.

Wildlife Refuges (Table 10)

More than 78,000 acres of publicly owned lands are administered as wildlife areas. The State Department of Conservation administers most of it but owns less than a third of the total. The U. S. Forest Service leases 28,000 acres to the Department of Conservation, and 27,000 acres are leased from private owners. The 16 wildlife areas, including fish hatcheries, are located in 15 counties.

TABLE 11—Distribution of Municipally Owned Lands (Outside Corporate Limits), by Counties, 1945

County	Sanitary facilities	Water- sheds	Air- ports	Parks	Unclassi- fied	Total
	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres
Barbour	2	0	0	0	0	2
Berkeley	0	0	502	0	0	502
Brooke	4	0	0	0	0	4
Cabell	0	1	0	0	85	86
Calhoun	0	0	0	0	300	300
Clay	0	0	0	0	1	1
Doddridge	0	0	0	0	1	1
Fayette	0	0	0	0	500	500
Grant	0	0	0	0	25	25
Greenbrier	0	0	165	0	3	168
Hampshire	0	0	0	0	5	5
Harrison	0	0	193	88	5	286
Jackson	0	0	0	0	13	13
Jefferson	4	0	0	5	0	9
Kanawha	10	0	0	0	0	10
Marion	0	46	0	90	150	286
Marshall	35	0	0	0	0	35
Mason	12	0	0	0	21	33
Mercer	0	0	36	40	0	76
Mineral	0	25	320	0	55	400
Mingo	0	0	0	0	10	10
Monongalia	0	0	304	0	0	304
Monroe	0	5	0	0	0	5
Morgan	2	0	0	0	11	13
Nicholas	6	0	0	0	0	6
Ohio	0	0	0	1,000	0	1,000
Pendleton	0	3	0	0	11	14
Pleasants	0	0	0	0	10	10
Preston	0	8	0	0	0	8
Raleigh	1	0	0	0	0	1
Randolph	0	4	228	0	0	232
Ritchie	0	0	0	0	1,850	1,850
Roane	0	0	0	0	3	3
Taylor	0	0	0	0	50	50
Tucker	0	14	0	0	0	14
Webster	0	0	0	0	1	1
Wetzel	1	0	0	0	0	1
Wood	0	0	494	0	0	494
Total	77	106	2,242	1,223	3,110	6,758

TABLE 12—Land Used by Primary and Secondary Schools and by Colleges and Universities, by Counties, 1945

County	Public primary and secondary schools	Colleges and universities		Total
		Public	Private	
	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres
Barbour	62	0	1,119	1,181
Berkeley	95	0	0	95
Boone	112	0	0	112
Braxton	150	0	0	150
Brooke	1	0	1,000	1,000
Cabell	159	20	0	179
Calhoun	50	0	0	50
Clay	63	0	0	63
Doddridge	70	0	0	70
Fayette	173	115	0	288
Gilmer	54	122	0	176
Grant	36	0	0	36
Greenbrier	126	0	26	152
Hampshire	68	165	0	233
Hancock	34	0	0	34
Hardy	67	987	0	1,054
Harrison	126	0	52	178
Jackson	75	0	0	75
Jefferson	46	274	40	360
Kanawha	1	117	5,761	5,878
Lewis	33	0	0	33
Lincoln	121	0	0	121
Logan	132	0	0	132
McDowell	350	0	0	350
Marion	172	45	0	217
Marshall	40	0	0	40
Mason	105	0	0	105
Mercer	69	87	0	156
Mineral	87	265	0	352
Mingo	1	0	0	1
Monongalia	139	1,088	0	1,227
Monroe	75	0	0	75
Morgan	55	0	0	55
Nicholas	90	0	0	90
Ohio	1	100	0	100
Pendleton	125	0	0	125
Pleasants	22	0	0	22
Pocahontas	1	0	0	1
Preston	105	457	0	562
Putnam	207	0	0	207
Raleigh	1	0	0	1

TABLE 12—Land Used by Primary and Secondary Schools and by Colleges and Universities, by Counties, 1945 (continued)

County	Public primary and secondary schools	Colleges and universities		Total
		Public	Private	
	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres
Randolph	118	0	132	250
Ritchie	125	0	0	125
Roane	104	0	0	104
Summers	54	0	0	54
Taylor	56	0	0	56
Tucker	50	0	0	50
Tyler	35	0	0	35
Upshur	109	0	43	152
Wayne	188	0	0	188
Webster	45	0	0	45
Wetzel	85	0	0	85
Wirt	85	0	0	85
Wood	185	0	0	185
Wyoming	90	0	0	90
Total	25,413	3,842	8,173	27,428

¹No report received.

²Includes 591 acres estimated for 6 counties for which no report was received. The estimate is computed on basis of the average for the 49 counties reporting.

Institutional Lands (Tables 6 and 7)

The state owns about 15,000 acres in prison farms, industrial schools, hospitals, and colleges and universities — a total of 36 institutions in 25 counties. The Federal Government has land used for a reformatory, a prison camp, and a veterans' hospital, totaling about 1,000 acres.

Municipal Lands (Table 11)

Reports from various sources have listed about 6,800 acres of municipally owned land outside corporate limits. Municipalities use rural lands for protection of the water supply, for airports, for parks, and for sewage disposal.

Highways (Table 2)

Highway rights-of-way, usually not owned in fee by the state, total approximately 130,000 acres. This figure was computed from known mileage of primary and secondary roads and from an estimated average width of 50 feet for primary and 30 feet for secondary roads.

Public-service Corporations

Data are unavailable by counties on land in public-service corporations. Acreage used by railroads totals 46,496 acres in rural areas and 2,909 acres in urban areas for the state. No data are available for other public-service corporations.

Airports (Table 13)

Data furnished by the Civil Aeronautics Administration show a total of 33 airports in 26 counties, with a total of about 4,300 acres. Eight municipally owned airports total 2,200 acres. The state owns the land on which one airport is located, and two are county-owned. Two-thirds of the airports and one-fourth of the land used by airports are privately owned.

Land Used for Educational Purposes (Table 12)

Publicly owned primary and secondary school sites occupy approximately 5,400 acres, ranging from 22 to 350 acres per county. Publicly supported colleges and universities, including experimental farms, use 3,842 acres. There are 13 of these educational institutions, located in 11 counties. The 8 privately supported colleges own 8,173 acres in 8

TABLE 13—Land in Airports, by Counties, 1945

County	Number of airports	Municipally owned	County- owned	State- owned	Other	Total
	Number	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres
Berkeley	3	502	0	0	184	686
Braxton	1	0	0	0	37	37
Cabell	1	0	0	0	60	60
Grant	1	0	0	0	32	32
Greenbrier	2	165	0	0	60	225
Hampshire	1	0	0	0	50	50
Hardy	1	0	0	0	110	110
Harrison	1	193	0	0	0	193
Jackson	1	0	0	0	46	46
Kanawha	1	0	0	0	50	50
Lewis	1	0	0	191	0	191
Logan	1	0	0	0	40	40
Marshall	1	0	0	0	36	36
Mercer	1	36	0	0	0	36
Mineral	3	320	0	0	47	367
Mingo	1	0	0	0	18	18
Monongalia	1	304	0	0	0	304
Ohio	1	0	650	0	0	650
Pocahontas	1	0	0	0	30	30
Putnam	1	0	0	0	39	39
Raleigh	1	0	0	0	79	79
Randolph	1	228	0	0	0	228
Roane	1	0	65	0	0	65
Summers	2	0	0	0	103	103
Upshur	1	0	0	0	76	76
Wood	2	494	0	0	85	579
Total	33	2,242	715	191	1,182	4,330

counties. Thus a total of more than 17,000 acres are used for educational purposes, although not all of it is used directly for campus activities. Of the 12 institutions reporting the major use of their lands, 4 listed farming, 2 forestry, and 1 inactive coal mining.

Church Properties

No data are available on the acreage of land used for religious purposes. The 1936 Census of Religious Bodies lists a total of 3,389 church properties for the state. Some of these properties have been reported as privately owned tax-exempt land (Table 2).



